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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2744  
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RUEAWJA/DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY

S E C R E T TUNIS 000236

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STATE FOR NEA/MAG (EAHOPKINS AND MHARRIS) AND S/WCI  
(MORRISON AND MUBANGU)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2017

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [KAWC](#) [TS](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PUSHES GOT FOR DETAINEE ASSURANCES

REF: A. TUNIS 230

- [1](#)B. TUNIS 193
- [1](#)C. TUNIS 139
- [1](#)D. STATE 10683

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROBERT F. GODEC FOR REASONS  
1.4 (b) AND (d)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) During a February 13 meeting on other topics, Ambassador pressed Foreign Minister Abdallah for confirmation of GOT assurances regarding the proposed transfer of Tunisian detainees at Guantanamo Bay (Ref D). Abdallah noted the request.

[1](#)2. (S/NF) Ambassador later continued the conversation with MFA Chief of Staff Hatem Atallah, who had accompanied the FM during Ambassador's meeting. (NOTE: As reported in Ref B, Ambassador had previously contacted Atallah on February 5 regarding the assurances. END NOTE.) Ambassador stressed

that the highest levels of the USG are awaiting a timely GOT response. Atallah said the GOT understands the importance of this time sensitive issue and the need for written assurances. While Atallah offered no formal commitment, he clearly understood the significance of the issue and the priority the USG places on a GOT response. Post will continue to press for a timely and comprehensive GOT response.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) COMMENT: During Ambassador's meeting, and in the context of another issue, the Foreign Minister indicated that he may marginalize MFA Secretary of State Saida Chtioui (Ref A). This raises the possibility that Chtioui's January 30 comments on detainee assurances (Ref C) may no longer be relevant. END COMMENT.  
GODEC